PersonalSpace

Rainbow on a gray day

The idea of actual gay people walking around inside their world headquarters was, apparently, too much to bear. On Monday, Focus on the Family officially closed its doors to visitors, ostensibly to "protect" its employees from a potential onslaught of Christian gays and lesbians who descended in a May Day action to protest the ministry's claims that homosexuality can be "cured."

The day before, activist Richard Murphy, above, of Miami, Fla., led an emotional march around Focus' massive campus in northern Colorado Springs. The crowd carried photos of gays who have committed suicide along with two black caskets meant to represent what Soulforce founder Rev. Mel White described as "our dead brothers and sisters."

"Today we walk to honor their lives, and mourn their deaths," White said.

Though temperatures hovered in the mid-30s and the day was occasionally punctuated with snow, an estimated 700 people showed up in support. Before marching around the headquarters, a series of speakers took the stage to criticize Focus founder James Dobson's stance and to point out that numerous health groups have debunked the notion that homosexuality is a disorder.

In a fiery speech, Fountain educator Mike Miles, an unsuccessful candidate for the U.S. Senate last year, likened the battle for gay equality to the civil rights movement and lashed out at Dobson as a bully who spreads fear and hatred. "There has always been a James Dobson, and I'm sorry to say there will always be a James Dobson," Miles said.

A half-block away, 24 cops surrounded eight members of the Fred Phelps clan from Topeka, Kansas, who staged their own rally. Holding up a sign that read "DOBSON FOCUS ON THE FAGS," one young woman yelled out to the people walking by: "God has created you for the sole purpose of casting you into hell."

— Cara DeGette
photo by Collan Fitzpatrick

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Kenneth H. Cleaver
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Colorado Springs, CO 80901

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SPECIALTY COFFEE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

October 19, 2004

Kenneth H. Cleaver
P.O. Box 1034
Colorado Springs, CO 80901

Dear Mr. Cleaver:

Answering yours of October 10th regarding the political/cultural, and perhaps life-partner leanings of those who drink espresso-based beverages. While I have not seen any data bearing on your questions directly, I can offer a few statistics from the research firm Mintel International Group Limited. For your interpretation:

If you are inclined to make certain assumptions about the politics and coffee habits of those who live in the Northeast, you might be surprised to discover that Northeasterners are more likely to buy their coffee in a donut shop or convenience store than they are a coffeehouse, compared to Midwesterners — about whom you may also have certain assumptions — who will choose a coffeehouse over both a donut shop and a convenience store. Southerners, too, are more likely to buy their coffeehouse than in a convenience store.

In fact, only with Westerners does the coastal coffee stereotype rule the day. Those in the West are a full 26% more likely to buy their coffee in a coffeehouse than in a convenience store, 31% more likely to buy their coffee in a coffeehouse than a donut shop. Effete a compli?

College graduates are more likely to buy coffee in a coffeehouse than any other venue, while those with no college education at all pick convenience stores first, restaurants second, and coffeehouses third. While suburbanites are more likely than urbanites to buy coffee in a coffeehouse, they are also more likely to buy coffee at a convenience store. Urban dwellers buy more coffee at donut shops than suburban dwellers do, but those in suburbia buy more coffee in gas stations.

According to the National Coffee Association's 2004 drinking trends survey, the average gourmet coffee drinker is 45 years old and earns $62,000 a year. Drill down and we find cappuccino drinkers are 43/$57k, Espresso drinkers 39/$65k, Mocha drinkers 42/$68k, and the latte drinkers are average aged 41 and have an annual income of $72,000. Though often ridiculed, the latte drinkers are apparently younger and wealthier than those favoring other types of gourmet coffee preparations. Ironic, indeed.

Fins consume 24 pounds of coffee per capita annually compared to just 9 pounds per capita in the United States.

Trusting your letter is more than a Novelloian inquiry, but not minding in any case, I hope you find this information of some value.

Very truly yours,

Mike Ferguson
Chief Communications Officer
SCAA